

COLORADO COMMISSION ON AGING



Advocating for Seniors

Annual Report

2019 - 2020

Report from the Chair FY 2019-20

We feel fortunate that Colorado Commission on Aging (CCOA) members had the opportunity to meet with older adults, in person, at various statewide locations during FY 2019-20. Specifically, in October 2019, the commission held a bi-monthly meeting in Montrose, CO. Janice Blanchard, the Governor's Senior Policy Advisor on Aging, attended the meeting as well as representatives from AARP and SAPGA. This multi-agency meeting provided an excellent opportunity for collaboration with organizations who work with Colorado's older adults and to hear the needs of older adults in Colorado's Western Slope area.



In addition, CCOA members had the opportunity to talk to Coloradans throughout the state regarding gaps in services, communication and programs. Specifically, one of the community meetings was held in La Junta in the Southeast part of the state on January 9, 2020. Additionally, in order to hear the issues of older Coloradans in the Denver metro area, a meeting at the Aurora Center for Active Adults was held in Aurora. On October 24, 2019, members of the CCOA were able to meet with the northwest segment of Colorado with a meeting held in Craig. Finally, to round out the CCOA informational listening sessions throughout Colorado, the Commission hosted a meeting in Sterling to represent the northeast older adults in Colorado.

Throughout these statewide meetings, five primary themes were expressed in each of the locations. Some of the needs Colorado older adults expressed were the following:

1. Communication—many of the older adults voiced their concerns regarding not knowing services available to them, specifically until they need those services.

2. Transportation—in many rural parts of the state there are gaps in getting from one place to the other and many communities are limited by county funds or by their particular payer source.
3. Socialization—this can relate to a true lack of services or the strong desire for adults to stay in their homes.
4. Assistance—older adults talked about the need for services from healthcare, cleaning up yards to tree trimming.
5. Volunteering—many older adults expressed the desire and willingness to volunteer, yet did not know where their skills, talents and interests would be useful to the community.

Shortly after the statewide meetings were held, COVID-19 was introduced to Colorado and the in-person community meetings and commission meetings were quickly pivoted to virtual meetings. In July, the Commission hosted a virtual Centenarian celebration and hosted a virtual Allen Buckingham awards event by providing letters and certificates to caregivers and volunteers throughout the state. Please see the articles about these meaningful events in this annual report. Finally, we have been busy recruiting for our upcoming open commission positions as both Joe Urban and Ruth Long will be leaving as outgoing commission members. We are eternally thankful for the work that all of our commission members do and look forward to welcoming new commission members. Sincere thanks to the contributions of our term limited commission members. We look forward to in-person meetings and community visits as we are allowed.

Continued good health and safety to all of you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jane Barnes'.

Jane Barnes, Chair Colorado Commission on Aging

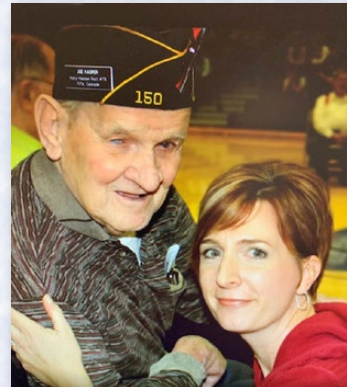
CCOA recognizes Colorado Centenarians for lifelong contributions

The CCOA hosted their annual Centenarian Celebration in July. As with many events in 2020, the celebration was held virtually. Centenarians from all over the state joined the video call as the CCOA commission members recognized and honored participants.

Governor Polis issued a proclamation recognizing July 16, 2020 as Centenarian Day honoring all Coloradans over the age of 100. In addition, he gave a certificate to each of the centenarians throughout the state.

Joe Kasper, a veteran living at Veterans Community Living Center at Rifle turned 100 years old while in quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic. He was interviewed and honored by news outlets throughout the state. Not only is Joe a distinguished

centenarian, he is also a WWII hero, who served in the US Army Air Corps and belonged to one of the first US squadrons who bombed on D-Day.



WWII hero and Colorado Centenarian, Joe Kasper was recognized at the annual CCOA Centenarian Celebration.

Annual Allen Buckingham award given to Volunteers and Caregivers throughout the state

Each year, the CCOA honors a Colorado resident with the Allen Buckingham award. This award is given to a nominee who exemplifies exemplary volunteer service, participation and contribution to activities that promote well-being and quality of life for seniors and/or recognized accomplishments related to the field of aging.



Rather than select one winner, the CCOA decided to recognize EVERY staff member and volunteer who worked tirelessly in the field of aging during the once-in-a century COVID-19 pandemic. A letter and certificate were provided to senior agencies throughout the state and certificates and letters were either handed or mailed to volunteers and staff members.

CCOA members and contact information

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FY 2020-21 CCOA Meeting Schedule*

*The CCOA meetings are currently held virtually
 Email Adrian.Cowan@state.co.us for details.

July 16, 2020 September 17, 2020
 August 20, 2020 October 15, 2020

November 19, 2020 April 15, 2021
 January 21, 2021 May 20, 2021
 February 18, 2021 June 17, 2021
 March 18, 2021